



DISCUSSION GUIDE

DEVELOPING A PERSONAL CODE OF ETHICS

Dr. D. Christopher Kayes, Professor of Management, George Washington University

Leadership

Lesson Description

A personal code of ethics helps a leader navigate difficult situations and build confidence among followers that he or she is making the most ethical decision. Learn more about developing a personal code of ethics, including the four questions every ethical code should address.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance of ethical considerations when leading and managing.
2. Identify the sources of ethics.
3. What are the four questions every code of ethics should address?

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important that leaders understand how others perceive their actions? Why is it important that other people perceive your actions as fair?
2. Think of a time when you had to make a difficult decision. In making that decision, what were the questions that you asked yourself? What does that say about your personal code of ethics?

Developmental Action

1. Think of someone in your community who everyone regards as ethical. Speak to this person about a difficult decision they had to make and how they made that decision.

About the Video Presenter

Dr. D. Christopher Kayes is a professor of management at the School of Business and a Senior Fellow at the Center for Excellence in Public Leadership at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He is author or co-author of five current and forthcoming books including *Destructive Goal Pursuit: The Mt. Everest Disaster* (Macmillan) and *The Learning Advantage: Six Practices of Learning Directed Leaders*, (Macmillan). Dr. Kayes has consulted with organizations around the world including National Institutes of Health, Oracle, Ericsson, Bank of New York Mellon, Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Judiciary, U.S. Army, and U.S. Navy. He has taught at universities around the world including Singapore Institute of Management, Zagreb School of Economics and Management, Helsinki School of Economics, and the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, Latvia, University of Hull, U.K., and Holy Spirit University, Beirut, Lebanon.

